theless, the people believed that someone had cheated them. They had joined the war on their own volition, won it at the price of two thirds of a million killed and a million wounded, had suffered many wartime privations; yet they were as poor after the war as before it. Who had robbed them of the fruits of victory? The answer was: the Allies! Opposition to the Versailles Treaty developed in Italy even before the treaty was signed. The masses of the people, disappointed by the lack of spoils of victory, turned against the government. Nitti's cabinet began to lose ground in the badly split parliament.

MUSSOLINI RIDES THE TIDE OF ANARCHY

The general elections in November, 1919, failed to clarify the political situation in Italy. The pendulum swung to the left, and the Socialists emerged as the strongest single party in parliament, followed by the Catholic People's party (*Populari*). After all the drumbeating in Milan, Mussolini got only 5,000 votes out of 350,000 cast in that city. Soon after the election, I met the Socialist leaders Turatti and Modigliani. Both were in low spirits. They complained of dissension in the party and labor unions, economic difficulties, weakness of the government.

I also met Bissolatti, the leader of the right wing of the Socialist movement. Old, with a mild, almost shy, manner and a soft voice, he impressed me as a man of great wisdom. He was deeply concerned about the political situation—no solid majority in the parliament, no unity among the people. "The parliamentary system," he said, "depends on the assumption that people are rational and that most of them will draw the same conclusions from objective facts. It cannot work when people are dominated by emotions. Since our party and the Catholics cannot agree on common action, they are bound to paralyze each other. This must lead to the collapse of the parliamentary system."

Nitti, the head of the government, was more optimistic. He believed Italy would gradually return to peacetime normalcy, and he managed somehow to keep the reins in his hands. There was no evidence of improvement, however; rather, the tide of anarchy was mounting.

Italian trains left and arrived several hours late and the stations were jammed with waiting passengers. A person planning to leave Rome for Milan on a two o'clock train would begin to inquire about the whereabouts of his train at three or four o'clock and would get a casual answer: "Five hours late." Some three hours later the answer would be "Seven hours late." Finally, the train would leave after midnight. Only once did I catch a train on time. When I asked when